

DATES AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE TEXT VOLUMES OF THE
HISTOIRE NATURELLE SECTION OF SAVIGNY'S DESCRIPTION
DE L'EGYPTE Z.N.(S.)2515

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The dates of the *Histoire naturelle* section of M. J. C. L. de Savigny's *Description de l'Egypte* have always been somewhat obscure. The authorship of one of the parts is also contentious. Nevertheless, the work has long been recognised as being of major importance in zoological literature as it contains accounts of many new taxa. It is important therefore to reach a consensus on its authorship and dating.

2. The full title of 'Egypte' is *Description de l'Egypte, ou recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Egypte pendant l'expédition de l'armée française, publié par les ordres de sa Majesté l'Empereur Napoléon le Grand*. The first edition of the *Histoire naturelle* section consists of five volumes, three of double folio-sized plates (71.5 × 52 cm), of which volumes 1 and 2 contain zoological material (volume 2bis being botanical and mineralogical plates) and two folio-sized volumes (39 × 24 cm) of text. The plates were almost certainly published independently of the text volumes and over several years. Consequently their dating constitutes a separate problem and is not dealt with in this paper (but see Pallary, 1934). Volume 1 of the text volumes consists of four discrete parts. Volume 2, although containing several individual contributions, is not expressed in parts.

3. Sherborn, 1897, made the first complete analysis of the dates and authors of the zoological portions of the text of the *Histoire naturelle* section and because of the meticulous nature of his work and the general familiarity with his conclusions it is his guidelines I shall follow.

4. Volume 1, part 1, *Histoire naturelle des Poissons du Nil* by Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (pp. 1–52) and *Système des Oiseaux de l'Egypte et de la Syrie* by Marie Jules-César Lelorgne de Savigny (pp. 63–114; pp. 53–62 dealing with botanical topics) are given by Sherborn as published in 1809. This date agrees with that given by Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1847, p. 425, for this part of his father's contribution. The remaining parts of zoological interest in volume 1, part 1, are *Description des Reptiles qui se trouvent en Egypte* by Etienne Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (pp. 115–120 with pp. 121–160 by his son Isidore), *Explication Sommaire des Planches de Reptiles* (supplément) by Jean Victor Audouin (pp. 161–184), *Description des Crocodiles de l'Egypte* by E. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (pp. 185–264), *Suite de l'histoire naturelle des Poissons du Nil* (pp. 265–310) by I. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and *Histoire naturelle des Poissons de la Mer Rouge et de la Méditerranée* (pp. 311–343) also by I. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire.

Sherborn considers all these parts as having been published in the same year, 1827. This date is in agreement with I. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, 1847, as far as his own contributions are concerned but he dates his father's parts, 'Reptiles' and 'Crocodiles', as 1809 and 1829 respectively. However, as Sherborn points out (p. 286), this conflicts with a footnote Isidore gives in du Petit-Thouars, 1855, p. 2, which dates the herpetological and ichthyological parts as 1827. Thus, to standardise the dates of all these parts of volume 1, part 1, as 1827 would clearly be in the interests of stability.

5. Volume 1, part 2, *Tableau systématique des Ascidiens* . . . by M. J. C. L. de Savigny (pp. 1-58) is, as Sherborn notes, of minor significance because all the specific names were published by Savigny in *Mémoires sur les Animaux sans Vertèbres* published in 1816. Consequently no date for this part is given.

6. Volume 1, part 3, *Système des Annélides* by M. J. C. L. de Savigny (pp. 1-128) Sherborn attributes, with little doubt, to a publication date of 1822.

7. Volume 1, part 4, *Explication sommaire des Planches*, consists of ten zoological sections: *Mollusques* (pp. 1-56), *Annélides* (pp. 57-76), *Crustacés* (pp. 77-98), *Arachnides* (pp. 99-186), *Insectes* (pp. 187-202), *Echinodermes* (pp. 203-212), *Zoophytes* (pp. 213-214), *Ascidies* (pp. 215-224), *Polypes* (pp. 225-244) and *Oiseaux* (pp. 251-318). In this part both authorship and date are uncertain due to the fact that Savigny, who is occasionally cited as co-author with Audouin, began to lose his sight and his precise contribution to the work is a moot point.

8. Savigny's failing sight is highlighted by the footnote in Sherborn's paper referring to Cailliaud, 1827, p. 271. In this work Cailliaud states:

'M. Savigny, de l'académie royale des sciences, s'était chargé de cette partie relative aux insectes; mais une ophthalmie de plus graves et plus opiniâtres l'a forcé de renoncer à toute espèce de travail.'

9. Confirmation of Savigny's eventual total loss of sight is given by Pallary, 1926, p. 3, who notes:

'Malheureusement durant son séjour en Égypte, Savigny avait contracté une maladie d'yeux qui, sous l'influence des fatigues occasionnées par l'examen des êtres microscopiques qu'il étudiait, évolua rapidement et se changea, en 1824, en une cécité complète. Une maladie nerveuse vint encore, hélas! aggraver son état en lui rendant tout travail intellectuel impossible, il ne put publier le texte qui aurait dû accompagner ses planches.'

10. Sherborn was in no doubt as to the authorship of volume 1, part 4. He attributed it solely to Jean Victor Audouin as he apparently had to begin the work again from the beginning, because Savigny did not pass any of his manuscripts on to him after he went blind.

11. Bonnet, 1945, p. 551, discussing the arachnid section of *Explication sommaire des Planches*, arrives at a different conclusion regarding authorship. He states:

'D'après explications données au début de l'article, Savigny avait déjà rédigé la description des Arachnides, jusqu'à la planche 4, lorsque, malade, il fut obligé d'interrompre ses travaux. Audouin, chargé de terminer ce travail, a repris ces descriptions, en les adoptant, sous la forme de ses Explications sommaires et en y ajoutant les descriptions des autres planches. Il n'en est pas moins vrai que la part de Savigny dans cet article est importante, surtout que la publication des planches lui appartient complètement, et que de nombreux noms nouveaux de genres et d'espèces sont de lui. C'est la raison pour laquelle l'article, qui est uniquement signé d'Audouin, me paraît devoir être mis comme fait en collaboration par ces deux auteurs et qu'on doit le leur attribuer sous la forme: [Savigny (J. C.) & Audouin].'

12. Whether this is accurate fact or sentiment for the ailing Savigny is arguable. What is clear however, is the extent to which authors differ in their interpretation of both the authorship and date of volume 1, part 4. For example:

- Bonnet, 1947, p. 2629, attributes *Lycosa tarentulina* (Arachnida) to Savigny & Audouin, 1825;
- Bouchet & Danrigal, 1982, p. 15, attribute *Bursatella savigniana* (Mollusca) to Audouin, 1826;
- Döderlein, 1921, p. 240, attributes *Asterias savignyi* (Echinodermata) to Audouin, 1824;
- Pallary, 1926, p. 25, attributes *Bursatella savigniana* (Mollusca) to Audouin 1827;
- Perrier, 1875, p. 340, attributes *Asterias savignyi* (Echinodermata) to Audouin, 1809;
- Roewer, 1954, p. 1572, attributes *Lycosa tarentulina* (Arachnida) to Audouin, 1827;
- 1958, p. 250, attributes *Lycosa tarentulina* (Arachnida) to Audouin, 1824.

13. In general, most workers tend to cite Audouin alone as the author of *Explication sommaire des Planches*, probably as a result of Sherborn's original paper. Thus, in following Sherborn's analysis, the author and date of volume 1, part 4, *Explication sommaire des Planches* may be cited as J. V. Audouin, [1826].

14. In volume 2, the sections dealing with zoological topics are *Description des Mammifères qui se trouvent en Egypte* by E. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (pp. 99–144) published, according to Sherborn, in 1818, with *Description des Mammifères qui se trouvent en Egypte* by E. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and J. V. Audouin (pp. 733–743) and *Description sommaire des Mammifères carnassiers qui se trouvent en Egypte* (pp. 744–750) by J. V. Audouin published in 1829.

15. For the removal of uncertainty of both dates of publication and authorship, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is requested to:

- (1) rule that the authors and dates of publication of the zoological portions of the text volumes of the *Histoire naturelle* section of Marie Jules-César Lelorgne de Savigny's *Description de l'Egypte* are to be taken as set out in Sherborn, 1897;
- (2) place the zoological portions of the text volumes of the *Histoire naturelle* section of Marie Jules-César Lelorgne de Savigny's *Description de l'Egypte* on the Official List of Works approved as available for Zoological Nomenclature.

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APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF AUTHORSHIP AND PUBLICATION DATES OF THE
ZOOLOGICAL PORTIONS OF THE TEXT VOLUMES OF THE HISTOIRE
NATURELLE SECTION OF DESCRIPTION DE L'EGYPTE

Based on Sherborn, 1897

Volume	Part	Pages	Author(s)	Date
1	1	1-52	E. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire	1809
1	1	63-114	M. J. C. L. de Savigny	1809
1	1	115-120	E. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire	1827
1	1	121-160	I. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire	1827
1	1	161-184	J. V. Audouin	1827
1	1	185-264	E. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire	1827
1	1	265-310	I. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire	1827
1	1	311-343	I. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire	1827
1	2	1-58	M. J. C. L. de Savigny	Not given
1	3	1-128	M. J. C. L. de Savigny	1822
1	4	1-318	J. V. Audouin	1826
2	—	99-144	E. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire	1818
2	—	733-743	E. Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire & J. V. Audouin	1829
2	—	744-750	J. V. Audouin	1829

N.B. There is a misprint on p. 286 of Sherborn's paper, four lines from the bottom of the page. For Vol. II read Vol. I.